Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 4-9, 12-14, 11-14, 16 and 17, and add new claims 18-20 as shown in the following list of claims. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A communication station adapted for contactless communication with transponders and with further communication stations, comprising:

first protocol-executing means configured ~~adapted~~ to function according to station-transponder protocol, the first protocol-executing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to effect communication between the communication station and at least one transponder while observing the station-transponder protocol;

second protocol-executing means configured ~~adapted~~ to function according to a station-station protocol that differs from the station-transponder protocol in respect of at least one protocol parameter, the second protocol-executing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to effect communication between the communication station and at least one further communication station while observing the station-station protocol;

first signal-processing means electrically connected to the first protocol-executing means, the first signal-processing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to code and decode signals for contactless station-transponder communication, the first signal-processing means being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication;

second signal-processing means electrically connected to the second protocol-executing means, the second signal-processing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to code and decode signals for contactless station-station communication, the second signal-processing means being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-station communication, the second signal-processing means being configured to code and decode the signals using one of a non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the contactless station-station communication; and

transmission means electrically connected to the first and second signal-processing means to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication to and from the first and second signal-processing means, the transmission means being configured ~~adapted~~ to receive and transmit electromagnetic signals for contactless communication with the transponders and the further communication systems.

2. (currently amended) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first protocol-executing means have energy-supply signal generating means that are configured ~~adapted~~ to generate an energy-supply signal each time the handling of the station-transponder protocol starts, and wherein the second protocol-executing means have synchronizing-signal generating means that are configured ~~adapted~~ to generate a synchronizing signal each time the handling of the station/station protocol starts.

3. (previously presented) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the station-station protocol is operative to cause a minimal energy consumption at the communication station when communicating with the at least one further communication station.

4. (currently amended) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first protocol-executing means are configured ~~adapted~~ to function according to the station-transponder protocol that is configured ~~adapted~~ to communicate with a plurality of transponders, and wherein the second protocol-executing means are configured ~~adapted~~ to establish a communication connection to a plurality of communication stations.

5. (currently amended) An integrated circuit for a communication station for contactless communication with transponders and with further communication stations, comprising:

first protocol-executing means configured ~~adapted~~ to function according to a station-transponder protocol, the first protocol-executing means being

configured ~~adapted~~ to effect communication between the communication station and at least one transponder while observing the station-transponder protocol;

second protocol-executing means configured ~~adapted~~ to function according to a station-station protocol that differs from the station-transponder protocol in respect of at least one protocol parameter, the second protocol-executing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to effect communication between the communication station and at least one further communication station while observing the station-station protocol;

first signal-processing means electrically connected to the first protocol-executing means, the first signal-processing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to code and decode signals for contactless station-transponder communication, the first signal-processing means being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication;

second signal-processing means electrically connected to the second protocol-executing means, the second signal-processing means being configured ~~adapted~~ to code and decode signals for contactless station-station communication, the second signal-processing means being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-station communication, the second signal-processing means being configured to code and decode the signals using one of a non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the contactless station-station communication; and

a terminal electrically connected to the first and second signal-processing means to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication to and from the first and second signal-processing means, the terminal being configured ~~adapted~~ to be connected to transmission means for contactless communication with the transponders and the further communication systems.

6. (currently amended) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first protocol-executing means have energy-supply signal generating means configured ~~adapted~~ to generate an energy-supply signal each time the station-transponder protocol starts, and wherein the second protocol-executing means have synchronizing-signal generating means that are configured ~~adapted~~ to

generate a synchronizing signal each time the handling of the station-station protocol starts.

7. (currently amended) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein the station-station protocol is configured ~~adapted~~ to minimize energy consumption at the communication station when communicating with the at least one further communication station.

8. (currently amended) An integrated circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first protocol-executing means are operative to function according to the station-transponder protocol, which is adaptive to communicate with a plurality of transponders, and wherein the second protocol-executing means are configured ~~adapted~~ to establish a communication connection to a plurality of communication stations.

9. (currently amended) A communication system adapted for contactless communication, comprising:

a plurality of transponders;

a plurality of communication stations, each comprising:

a microprocessor configured ~~adapted~~ to execute a station-transponder protocol for contactless station-transponder communication with at least one of the transponders and a station-station protocol for contactless station-station communication with at least one of the communication stations, wherein the station-station protocol differs from the station-transponder protocol by at least one protocol parameter, the microprocessor being further configured ~~adapted~~ to code and decode signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and to code and decode signals for the contactless station-station communication, the microprocessor being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless transponder communication and to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station communication, the microprocessor being configured to code and decode the signals using one of a non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the contactless station-station communication; and

transmission means electrically connected to the microprocessor to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication to and from the microprocessor, the transmission means being configured ~~adapted~~ to receive and transmit electromagnetic signals for contactless communication with the transponders and the communication systems.

10. (canceled).

11. (previously presented) A communication system as claimed in claim 9, wherein each of the transponder is an RF tag.

12. (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the microprocessor is configured ~~adapted~~ to generate an energy-supply signal.

13. (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the microprocessor is configured ~~adapted~~ to generate a synchronizing signal.

14. (currently amended) A communication station adapted to communicate with a plurality of transponders, comprising:

a microprocessor configured ~~adapted~~ to execute a station-transponder protocol for contactless station-transponder communication with at least one of the transponders and a station-station protocol for contactless station-station communication with other communication stations, wherein the station-station protocol differs from the station-transponder protocol by at least one protocol parameter, the microprocessor being further configured ~~adapted~~ to code and decode signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and to code and decode signals for the contactless station-station communication, the microprocessor being further configured ~~adapted~~ to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-transponder ~~transponder~~ communication and to modulate and demodulate the signals for the contactless station-station station

communication, the microprocessor being configured to code and decode the signals using one of a non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the contactless station-station communication; and

transmission means electrically connected to the microprocessor to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication to and from the microprocessor, the transmission means being configured ~~adapted~~ to receive and transmit electromagnetic signals for contactless communication with the transponders and the other communication systems.

15. (previously presented) A communication station as claimed in claim 14, wherein each of the transponders is an RF tag.

16. (currently amended) A communication station as claimed in claim 14, wherein the microprocessor is configured ~~adapted~~ to generate an energy-supply signal.

17. (currently amended) A communication system as claimed in claim 14, wherein the microprocessor is configured ~~adapted~~ to generate a synchronizing signal.

18. (new) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second signal-processing means is configured to code and decode the signals using the FM zero code for the contactless station-station communication.

19. (new) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second signal-processing means is configured to code and decode the signals using the non-return-to-zero code for the contactless station-station communication.

20. (new) A communication station as claimed in claim 1, wherein the transmitting means includes a transmission coil electrically connected to the first and second signal-processing means to transmit and receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication and the signals for the contactless station-station communication to and from the first and second signal-processing means.